

the cable-station here and also that on the opposite side of the Straits. There are, no doubt, good reasons for the course that was adopted in laying the cable in the first instance; but I believe I am correct in saying that if a new cable were laid to Australia, it would be best to run it direct to Wellington, for every reason: in any case, the advantages from the defence point of view should be borne in mind. The cable-stations at Lyell's Bay, Wellington, and White's Bay could be defended for about £6,000, the guns required for the purpose being in the colony. I beg also to point out the advisability of being able to fit out at a moment's notice a cable-repairing steamer. The necessary appliances are in the colony, and it would only be necessary to survey a suitable steamer trading to the port, and have the necessary plans and specifications for her alterations prepared. The repairing of a cable rapidly is of more importance in war time than even its defence.

Expenditure.—The expenditure for the year 1886–87 has been £139,429. This has been made up as follows: Cost of land, £10,653; works, wages, &c., £65,846; guns and equipments, £51,484; general expenditure, £11,446: total, £139,429. The estimate for last year was £130,000, which was afterwards reduced to £120,000. The excess has been caused by the increase in the land taken for the works, by a portion of the English orders having been delivered sooner than estimated, and by charges for works not in connection with, or estimated for, the works having been charged thereto. The accompanying return (Enclosure A) shows the amounts which have been expended and charged to the works over and above what was estimated. From this return it will be seen that, if the original estimated cost of the actual works is allowed, there will be still a balance of nearly £25,000 to cover liabilities to date and complete the works.

TABLE showing ESTIMATES for WORKS, LIABILITIES, and EXPENDITURE on DEFENCE WORKS, New Zealand.

<i>Estimates of Expenditure.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Expenditure and Liabilities.</i>	£	s.	d.
Original estimate of cost of defences (<i>see</i> report, 12th May, 1886) ..	313,735	0	0	By Expenditure for years 1885, 1886, 1887	266,595	19	4
Amount required to be added on account of military labour allowed for, but not provided ..	15,000	0	0	Liabilities for English and other contracts incurred ..	71,124	13	10
Add for land purchased over and above that actually required for defences, and amount in excess of estimate ..	22,000	0	0	Balance available for meeting liabilities on, and required for completion of, works ..	24,794	6	10
Reinstatement of quarantine station at Ripa Island ..	2,000	0	0				
Add for amounts paid to General Steward, Public Works officers, and additional stores not actually required for works	10,780	0	0				
	<u>£362,515</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>£362,515</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

E. M. TUDOR BODDAM, Lieut.-Colonel,
Engineer for Defences.

Wellington, 30th April, 1887.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF MILITARY EDUCATION.

Lieut.-Colonel BAILEY to Major-General Sir G. S. WHITMORE, K.C.M.G.

SIR,—

28th April, 1887.

I have the honour to report as follows on the working of the Council of Military Education:—

The Council was established on the 1st of September, 1886, and its first duty was to institute a regular and methodical system of examination, in order that officers in all parts of the colony should be examined under exactly similar conditions, and with strict fairness and impartiality.

These objects have been attained in the following manner: Papers are prepared by the Council, and sent in sealed covers to all stations. Examinations are carried out as nearly as possible at the same time, in the presence of some of the members of the local Boards, and the sealed covers containing the questions are not opened until the candidates for examination are assembled. The members of the Board prevent communication among the candidates, and keep strict silence while they are writing their replies.

The candidates' replies are distinguished by a number only, and their names are therefore not known to the Council when awarding marks. This system has worked well so far, and appears to have given very general satisfaction. As, hitherto, officers have been rather behind the standard required, the questions at each succeeding examination are made slightly more searching and practical; and this will be continued until, in time, a higher standard is reached. For field officers and adjutants the examination is more severe, and subjects are introduced which, though elementary, belong to the higher branches of military education. To pass these examinations officers must read the usual text-books on military tactics, field fortification, and military administration.

The Council regret to have to report that instances have occurred in which officers of the Volunteer force, although able to pass the necessary examination, in purely military subjects, were nevertheless very deficient in ordinary elementary education, especially in their writing and spelling, which were exceedingly bad. It may soon be desirable to insist upon officers being required, before being elected, to pass at least the same standard as is laid down for the Permanent Militia.

A syllabus has been published which enables officers of all ranks and arms of the service to see at once what subjects they are required to pass in, and the text-books recommended. Where suitable text-books are not procurable they have been prepared by the Council, and are either printed or in course of being printed.